unemployment are obtained through quinquennial labour force surveys carried out by National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO). Last such survey was carried out in 1999-2000. As per these surveys, estimated number of unemployed persons in the country on usual status basis has gone up from approximately 7.5 million in 1993-94 to 9.0 million in 1999-2000.

**Creation of Employment and Apex Manpower Development Fund**

3046. SHRI S.M. LAL JAN BASHA: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Indians are to be worst hit by the Saudi job quota of introducing a ceiling on the number of expatriates from a country; and

(b) the measures proposed by Government to create an Employment and Apex Manpower Development Fund to rehabilitate those Indians who would be forced to come back?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) The fixation of quotas is likely to have an adverse impact on employment of fresh Indian emigrants in Saudi Arabia.

(b) There is no proposal to create such fund because the existing Indian emigrants in Saudi Arabia are not expected to be forced to come back as the Saudi Arabian Government has decided that the number of expatriates are to be reduced so as not to exceed 20% of the Saudi population over a period of ten years, *i.e.*, by 2013.

**Amendment in Contract Labour Act, 1970**

3047. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to amend the Contract Labour (Abolition and Regulation) Act, 1970 in the current session of Parliament;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether adequate provisions have been made in the amendment Bill for labour welfare and retrenchment process and insurance benefits for the workers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) The Government have received various proposals from social partners for amendment to the Contract Labour (Regulation and Abolition) Act, 1970. The details are yet to be worked out and hence no definite time-limit can be given.

(c) While amending the said Act, views of all social partners would be kept in view and adequate protection to the contract labour would be ensured.

**Women workers in night shifts**

3048. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have taken a decision to ratify the protocol of 1990 permitting the women work-force to work in the factories during night shifts;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to ensure adequate safeguards for occupational safety of the female workers; and

(d) whether Government propose to amend Section 66 of the Factories Act, 1948 for the purpose and if so, by when?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI VIJAY GOEL): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. With a view to ensuring optimal utilisation of the installed capacity, promotion of export and generation of employment opportunities for women, Government had decided to ratify Protocol of 1990 to the ILO Night Work (women) Convention (Revised), 1948 to provide flexibility in the matter of employment of women during night and related amendment to the Factories Act, 1948.

(c) The occupier of the factory shall be responsible for providing adequate safeguards as regards to occupational safety and health, adequate protection to their dignity, honour and also provide them transportation from factory premises to nearest point of their residence.

(d) Yes, Sir. Amendment to Section 66 of the Factories Act can be made only after registration of the ratification of Protocol of 1990 with the Director General, ILO.